

Assistant Director for Operations

2 March 1949

Chief, FBIB

FBIB Communications

REF. Memorandum dated 1 November 1948, subject as above, to Executive for ADM, through ADO, from Chief, FBIB, with attached Memorandum of Understanding

1. The above reference was reviewed and the service rendered by the London to Washington AT&T circuit was discussed with Colonel W. T. Guest, Chief, Army Communications Service, Department of the Army, on 2 March 1949.

2. The salient features of this service have been:

a. Outages to FBIB in the circuit have varied from 41 to 84 hours per week due to equipment and power failures, atmospherics, frequency changes, maintenance, and teleconferences, which have made it necessary for FBIB to continue to use the London-Frankfurt(or Heidelberg)-Washington Signal Corps circuit regularly, as well as to use Western Union or commercial cables to a limited extent.

b. The total cost of Western Union and commercial cable traffic filed since activation of the AT&T circuit is approximately \$7,700.

c. The average time lag in receipt in the FBIB Washington office of copy from Caversham, England, when there is no backlog has been reduced from approximately three hours to one hour.

d. The present communications arrangement has also enabled FBIB to increase significantly its file from London and Cairo, which averaged approximately 44,000 words daily during February 1949.

e. In general this arrangement has greatly enhanced the FBIB service and end product.

3. Inquiry was made of Colonel Guest concerning London to Washington communications, as follows:

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a. Is the new Heidelberg signal center an improvement over the old Frankfurt center, or will it be by 1 July 1949, and can it handle FBIB traffic to and from London without the use of the present direct circuit?

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b. Is it necessary or desirable to continue the present arrangement and, if so, to what extent would CIA be expected to participate financially?

4. Colonel Guest advised substantially as follows:

a. At present the Heidelberg center is not an improvement over the old Frankfurt installation. However, there are still three channels from Heidelberg which are not installed and the center is in some other respects not complete. It may improve by 1 July 1949, but this is not a certainty.

b. At the present time the Heidelberg center could not handle all FBIB traffic and it is uncertain, but doubtful, that it will be able to handle it by 1 July 1949.

c. At this time it appears highly desirable for the Army to continue to lease the direct circuit to London, but due to the limited use which the Army makes of this circuit, it can be justified only as insurance against breakdowns in their regular circuits. While this insurance is desired, it would be too expensive for the Army to pay for alone.

e. Budgeting plans of the Army Communications Service are not sufficiently firm at this time to permit Colonel Guest to state exactly what participation by CIA would be necessary.

d. Colonel Guest suggested that we reexamine the entire situation on or about 1 May 1949, at which time the uncertainty in a, b, and c above could be resolved.

5. Inquiry was also made of Army capacity to handle FBIB Far East traffic, as follows:

a. Colonel Guest was advised that we were considering the possibility of starting an interim operation on Okinawa on or about 1 July 1949 which would eventually produce a daily file of approximately 20,000 words to Washington.

b. That it was our desire to send this traffic to Washington by the most direct route, avoiding the Tokyo or Manila relay points if possible.

6. Colonel Guest advised that there would be no difficulty in handling our traffic from Okinawa by 1 July 1949 but it will probably be necessary to file the traffic via Tokyo. We might at a later date work out some means of sending it direct.

7. It is concluded that:

a. No further action should be taken in connection with the London to Washington traffic for fiscal year 1950 until about 1 May 1949, at which time the entire problem will be reexamined. In all probability, however, it will be desirable to continue the present communications setup, in which case CIA will undoubtedly be asked by the Army to bear a substantial share of the cost of the leased commercial circuit.

b. No difficulty will be encountered in FRIB Far East communications except that it will not be possible initially to avoid routing Okinawa-originated traffic through Tokyo.

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